



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region 4 Headquarters
4600 Giant Springs Road
Great Falls, MT 59405
(406) 454-5840

Environmental Assessment Decision Notice for the Proposed Marias River State Park and Wildlife Management Area Access Road and Parking Area Improvements April 30, 2009

Description of Proposed Action: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to construct an all-weather road to provide public and administrative access to the newly established Marias River State Park and Wildlife Management Area (SP/WMA) in Toole County, Montana. The primary access road would connect Hjartarson County Road with the northwestern corner of the SP/WMA, crossing private ranch property. The proposed action would also encompass other minor ranch road improvements as required by the easement agreement and the development of a formal parking area for visitors to the SP/WMA.

Public Process and Comments: A draft Environmental Assessment regarding this proposed action was posted on March 31, 2009 in the Recent Public Notices section of the FWP public website. Public comments were taken for 30 days through April 29, 2009. Legal notices were printed twice each in the *Great Falls Tribune*, *Helena Independent Record*, *Shelby Promoter*, and the *Valerian*. Printed copies were mailed to sixteen nearby landowners. A copy of the EA was placed in the Region 4 HQ lobby for public review.

One comment was received via email during the comment period; supportive of the project.

Decision: Based on the Environmental Assessment and public comment, it is my decision to approve the proposed action and construct the proposed access road on the McCormick Road Easement and associated parking area on FWP property, and complete associated ranch road improvements as discussed in the EA.

In accordance with FWP policy, an appeal may be made by any person who has either commented in writing to the department on the proposed project, or who has registered or commented orally at a public meeting held by the department on the proposed project, or who can provide new evidence that would otherwise change the proposed plan. An appeal must be submitted to the Director of FWP in writing and must be postmarked or received within 30 days of this decision notice. The appeal must describe the basis for the appeal, how the appellant has previously commented to the department or participated in the decision-making process, and how the department can provide relief. The appeal should be mailed to: Director, Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1420 East 6th Avenue, Helena, MT 59620.

/s/

Graham Taylor
Acting Regional Supervisor